

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 8, 18 – 25, 28 and 31 – 43 are pending and rejected.

The applicants' attorney amends claims 1, 18, 19, 32 – 35 and 40 – 43. Claims 1, 18 and 19 have been amended to address the examiner's art-based rejections. Claims 32 – 35 and 40 – 43 have been amended not to overcome the examiner's art-based rejections, but to more clearly recite an aspect of the applicants' invention. The applicants' attorney respectfully asserts that claims 1 – 8, 18 – 25, 28 and 31 – 43, as amended, are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed below.

If, after considering this response, the examiner believes the claims should not be allowed, the applicants' attorney respectfully requests that before issuing an Office Action, the examiner call Mr. John Janeway (425-455- 5575) to schedule a telephone conference to further the prosecution of the claims.

Claims 1 – 8 and 31 – 37

The applicants' attorney respectfully asserts that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Japanese Patents 52143691 (JP '691) and 06040379 (JP '379), and U.S. Patent 5,277,117 issued to Bender *et al.* (Bender) for at least the following reason. Each fails to disclose a multi-mode hull operable to allow the vessel to move through water in at least two of the following operational modes:

- a logistics mode in which the vessel's draft is nine feet or less,
- a catamaran mode in which the vessel's draft is deeper than nine feet and less than or equal to twelve feet,
- a SWATH mode in which the vessel's draft is deeper than twelve feet and less than or equal to twenty feet, and
- a low freeboard mode in which the vessel's draft is deeper than twenty feet.

Claims 2 – 8 and 31 – 37, as amended, are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies on claim 1 as amended.

Claims 18 and 38 – 43

Claim 18, as amended, is patentable over JP '691, JP '379 and Bender at least for reasons similar to those recited above in support of claim 1, as amended, over JP '691, JP '379 and Bender.

Claims 38 – 43, as amended, are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies from claim 18, as amended.

Claims 19 – 25 and 28

Claim 19, as amended, is patentable over JP '691, JP '379 and Bender at least for reasons similar to those recited above in support of claim 1, as amended, over JP '691, JP '379 and Bender.

Claims 20 – 25 and 28, as amended, are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies from claim 19, as amended.

Conclusion

The applicants' attorney respectfully requests the examiner withdraw the rejection against claims 1 – 8, 18 – 25, 28 and 31 – 43, as amended, and issue an allowance for these claims.

Should any additional fees be required, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

If, after considering this response, the examiner believes the claims should not be allowed, the applicants' attorney respectfully requests that before issuing an Office Action, the examiner call Mr. John Janeway (425-455- 5575) to schedule a telephone conference to further the prosecution of the claims.

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Respectfully submitted,

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